

# The Charity Governance Awards 2019

#charitygov19



Organised by  
THE CLOTHWORKERS'  
COMPANY

## Entry Guidance

[www.charitygovernanceawards.co.uk](http://www.charitygovernanceawards.co.uk)

This document is designed to provide you with all the information you'll need to complete your entry including criteria for entry and full category questions. You may wish to draft your responses to the questions in advance, so that you may copy and paste final answers into the online entry form.

## CRITERIA

### **Entry to the Charity Governance Awards 2019 is free.**

Entries are welcome from any registered charity, big or small, that meets the following criteria.

Charities must:

- be **registered in the UK** by the Charity Commission (or the equivalent in each devolved nation)
- have been established before 31 December 2015
- only submit one entry across all seven awards\*

Entries must:

- cover activities undertaken in the last five years (2013-2018)
- focus on the work of the main board, not sub-committees
- be submitted by a trustee, employee or volunteer of the charity
- be signed off by the charity's CEO or chair of the board

**Deadline for entry: Tuesday, 22 January 2019, 12 noon**

*\*Note to previous award winners: Previous award winners are welcome to enter the awards again, but cannot re-enter the same category before a year has elapsed (if you won the 'Embracing Digital' category in 2018, you may submit an entry to a **different** category for the 2019 awards and cannot re-enter the 'Embracing Digital' category again until the 2020 awards).*

## YOU WILL NEED:

To complete the application form you will require the following:

- Your email address
- Charity address
- Region of charity's UK head office
- Name of Chair
- Name of CEO
- Registered charity number (from the Charity Commission or devolved nation equivalent)
- Number of paid staff
- Number of volunteers
- Annual income from last published accounts
- Year established
- A 150-word description of what your organisation does
- A copy of your latest published annual accounts to be uploaded with your entry form
- At least 1 (or up to 3) good quality, high-resolution image(s) which illustrate your charity's work and could be used in the Awards publicity if you are shortlisted
- Name and contact details of the person who should be contacted in the event that your entry is shortlisted for the awards (the person who submitted the application, if different, will also be contacted; it is recommended that you provide a staff member, if possible, or a ranking board member as the additional contact in the event that we are unable to reach you).
- Name and contact details of a referee who **may** be contacted to support your entry if you are shortlisted (the referee should be someone who is external to the charity but is familiar with the activities of the charity).

# CATEGORY QUESTIONS

## BOARD DIVERSITY & INCLUSIVITY

This award is for organisations that can demonstrate diversity within their board membership, and a commitment to being inclusive. We are looking for diversity in its broadest sense: diversity of approach, based on differing lived experience, culture, ethnicity, disability, professional or sector background, age or other factors. We are looking for charities where this diversity complements the specific nature of the charity and its work – for example, the range of beneficiaries and the organisation’s scope, strategy and values.

The judges will be looking for boards that can demonstrate that they have attracted a broad range of suitable trustees and supported them all to participate effectively. We will be looking for **evidence** of board culture which welcomes different opinions but is able to conclude discussions in a consensus for effective decision making and good governance. This award seeks to demonstrate how truly diverse and inclusive boards have a positive impact on the organisation and its performance.

The entry must focus on the work of the main board, but if any sub-committees or other governance groups outside the main board made a contribution, you are welcome to tell us about that in your entry.

Read about the 2018 winner, [ActionAid UK](#), and why they won.

### Questions to answer

(Max 250 words response per question)

**In what ways is your board diverse, and how does this diversity further the mission and strategy of your charity?**

*Please describe the diversity of your board, and how this diversity relates to your charity’s aims, its work and its stakeholders. You’re encouraged to think broadly about what diversity means to you and what it looks like on your board.*

**Practically, how has the charity achieved this level of diversity?**

*Please explain what steps you have taken to recruit a diverse board. If you monitor or benchmark diversity, please describe how you do this.*

**How does the board ensure that all voices (especially minority voices) are heard in board meetings?**

*Consider how board meetings are managed to ensure those with different backgrounds and skills are given a voice and can participate on an equal footing. What role does the Chair play?*

**In what ways has the diversity of your board had a positive impact on your charity and its performance?**

*Please give examples of how the diverse and inclusive nature of your board has benefited your charity and its work. Examples could include decision making, risk management, strategy, oversight or outcomes for beneficiaries.*

## EMBRACING DIGITAL

This award is for a board that has championed digital to help the charity meet its strategic objectives and deliver more for beneficiaries. We are looking for a charity which has embraced the opportunities that digital offers, and harnessed them to innovate or improve its activities. This isn't just about using digital communications and social media more effectively: we are looking for examples of charities that are using digital across any part of the organisation's work – service delivery, fundraising, marketing and communications, operations or governance to improve its effectiveness, efficiency and potentially drive culture change. The focus of the entry could be a new project, or it could be outlining how digital is used by the charity more generally, however, you need to illustrate the role and impact the board has had.

The entry must focus on the work of the main board, but if any sub-committees or other governance groups outside the main board made a contribution, you are welcome to tell us about that in your entry.

Read about the 2018 winner, [Bliss](#), and why they won.

### Questions to answer

(Max 250 words response per question)

#### **What was the strategy for adopting digital?**

*Please explain how digital has helped the organisation to achieve its strategic goals. What was the challenge and why was digital chosen as the solution?*

#### **How is digital used in practice?**

*Describe the most important digital project(s)/approaches that you have used. Please outline the objectives and briefly describe how you implemented the project or new approach. Did you carry out user research to help design your digital approach? What has changed as a result of the project(s)/new approach in how you work?*

#### **What is the outcome of adopting digital in this way?**

*Having adopted new digital practices, please outline the impact on the charity. This could include improved outcomes for beneficiaries or increased efficiency. Please provide quantitative and qualitative evidence. Has the approach delivered a Return On Investment (ROI)?*

#### **What role did the board play in supporting the adoption of the digital approach?**

*How were the opportunities, risks and investment necessary to the digital project/approach reviewed and agreed upon? How did the board support the senior management team (if there is one) with the new approach? What steps did the board take to ensure that it had sufficient expertise to be effective?*

#### **What has the board learnt from the experience?**

*What has the digital project/new approach meant for the board? Has the board re-evaluated the skills and experience it needs at a governance level? Has it made changes to its strategy?*

## EMBRACING OPPORTUNITY AND HARNESSING RISK

This award is for a board that has championed the charity to find or respond to a good opportunity and exploit it for the benefit of the community that the organisation exists to serve. This could mean working in new ways and markets, partnering with organisations to achieve a new direction, raising funds in a very different way or adopting a new financial model. The judges are looking for examples of considered risk-taking that has enabled the charity to deliver more, meet the needs of more beneficiaries, raise its profile or grow its income. The judges are looking for examples of initiatives that help the organisation meet its charitable objectives and where they have delivered long-term benefits and change.

There have been recent high-profile examples of the negative side of risk-taking for charities. This award seeks to demonstrate that risk, when well managed and in keeping with a charity's values, can deliver benefit to the charity's strategic direction, and, ultimately, its beneficiaries.

The entry must focus on the work of the main board, but if any sub-committees or other governance groups outside the main board made a contribution, you are welcome to tell us about that in your response.

Read about the 2018 winner, [Missing People](#), and why they won.

### Questions to answer

(Max 250 words response per question)

#### **How did the charity find the opportunity?**

*Please explain the process the charity went through to identify or find, or respond to the opportunity, including outlining the role of the board.*

#### **Why did the charity decide to exploit the opportunity?**

*Outline the process the charity – including the board – went through when considering the opportunity, both the potential and the risks.*

#### **What role did the board play in taking the new entrepreneurial approach?**

*Consider how the board supported the CEO and management team (if the charity has paid staff) with the opportunity.*

#### **What impact did your charity see as a result of exploiting this opportunity?**

*Having responded to the opportunity, please outline the impact on the charity. This impact may be demonstrated by evidence of financial outcomes, social impact, influence and reach.*

#### **How has the board used the learning from this process to feed into its long-term strategy?**

*Consider illustrating how the learning has been used and providing evidence for what has changed.*

## IMPROVING IMPACT

Categories are:

- Charities with 0-3 paid staff
- Charities with 4-25 paid staff
- Charities with 26 or more paid staff

This award is for organisations that can demonstrate how the board has contributed towards the increase of the charity's impact in relation to its cause, mission and values. We are looking for examples of increasing social impact, not just fundraising or increasing income.

The judges will be looking at how impact is described and measured, and how this has changed, as a result of the role that the board played; and also, the longer-term increase in impact for the charity, its beneficiaries and mission, that the board helped achieve. The entry should look to create a compelling narrative throughout, which explains the organisation's context, why you made the decisions you made and the role the board played in supporting this.

The entry must focus on the work of the main board, but if any sub-committees or other governance groups outside the main board made a contribution, you are welcome to tell us about that in your response.

Read about the 2018 winners – [Home-Start Slough](#), [Jigsaw4U](#) and [Families for Children](#) – and why they won.

### Questions to answer

(Max 250 words response per question)

**What was the increased impact you achieved for your cause and mission, and how did your charity achieve it?**

*The judges are looking for organisations that have shown an increase in impact and to understand what 'impact' means for your organisation. Be specific about your impact – focus on outcomes rather than outputs. The application should also focus on the impact you achieved, (rather than the recognition you have received) and what you learnt. Please also identify the period over which this took place.*

**How does the board know that you achieved this increased impact?**

*Please use qualitative and quantitative evidence to support your comments. Use both numbers and stories to demonstrate the changes you have created in people's lives. Explain how you used existing evidence, as well as gathering your own evidence.*

**What did the board do to enable this to happen?**

*Please outline: the board's role (specifically looking at the board's governance*

*role, rather than hands-on operational roles) and explain how this connects to impact; how the board, the staff and volunteers governed differently. What has been the increased impact? What steps did the board take to ensure that it had sufficient expertise to play this role effectively and how did they work with the management team?*

**How has the board used the learning from this process to feed into the charity's strategy?**

*Consider illustrating how the learning has been used and what has changed. Don't shy away from failure. Organisations should include information about what went well and what didn't go well (and what they learned).*

**How is the board ensuring that this increased impact is sustained over time?**

*Please distinguish between financial measures, review and monitoring mechanisms, and other forms of support.*

## MANAGING TURNAROUND

This award is for a board that has directly contributed to the positive change in a charity's future by taking it from a low point, with an uncertain future, to one where it now has upward momentum, based on a clear strategy and sustainable plan. This award is not just limited to financial turnarounds: it could, for example, be about turning around reputation, strategic drift or loss of engagement by key stakeholders.

The judges are looking for evidence of turnarounds that are sustainable in the long-run, so that the charity is better placed to achieve its mission and strategic goals, and meet the needs of its beneficiaries more effectively whilst adhering to its values.

The entry must focus on the work of the main board, but if any sub-committees or other governance groups outside the main board made a contribution, you are welcome to tell us about that in your response.

Read about the 2018 winner, [The Brain Charity](#), and why they won.

### Questions to answer

(Max 250 words response per question)

**What challenges did the board identify that the charity needed to address?**

*What were the implications of these challenges for beneficiaries, stakeholders, and the charity itself?*

**How did the board set about overcoming those challenges?**

*What steps did the board take to address these challenges? What strategy did they set in place?*

**How has the position of the charity improved?**

*Please provide qualitative and quantitative evidence*

**What was the board's role in the turnaround?**

*Please outline the specific role the board played and what has been learnt by the board through this process.*

## APPLY TODAY

Have everything you need? We recommend drafting your responses in advance so that you may copy and paste them into the online entry form. We also recommend saving a copy of your final entry responses for your own records, as you will not be able to download your responses from the online entry form submission tool.

Visit [www.charitygovernanceawards.co.uk](http://www.charitygovernanceawards.co.uk) to apply.

You will be able to edit your entry until the registration deadline (22 January, 12 noon). Shortlisted charities will be notified by 3 April, and the awards ceremony and reception will be held at on 22 May.

The Charity Governance Awards are sponsored and hosted by The Clothworkers' Company. The Awards are organised in partnership with NPC (New Philanthropy Capital), Prospectus and Reach Volunteering.

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